

Interview with  
Luis Roberto Enciso  
Sept. 16, 1957

QUESTION: What do the men in this camp seem to think about  
No. 26 the doctor?

ANSWER: The men as a whole at this camp don't seem to like the doctor. He doesn't attend them in the proper manner. I think the reason for this, or at least one of the reasons, is because of what happened last week.

A very good friend of mine died as a result of an accident. But, he died really because he lacked the proper attention that he should have received from the camp doctor and from the other doctor that he tried to see. It seems that my friend was working on a farm with a grass-seeding machine. He was trying to clear some weeds from the blades of the machine when he received a cut on his index and middle fingers. The cut in itself was not too serious, although the cut on the middle finger did reach the bone. He was immediately taken by the mayordomo to see one of the doctors in that area. This was not the camp doctor. The first doctor that attended him sewed up his fingers, put a bandage on them, and sent him back to the camp saying that he ~~did~~ would require no more treatment. Three days after the accident, my friend started complaining that his hand and his arm hurt; and he asked Mr. Piedra if he might see the regular camp doctor. My friend told me that Piedra called up the first doctor that attended him and also called up the camp doctor. And since the first doctor said that he required no further treatment, he was refused a chance to see either one of these doctors again. A few days after this, my friend complained that the pain had reached his shoulder and that his hand was starting to smell bad. The bandages had, of course, not been changed and they were pretty dirty. In desperation my friend finally snuck on board the bus that takes the patients from the camp to see the doctor; but enroute to the doctor's office, Mr. Piedra saw him on the bus and made him get down and walk back to the camp. My friend even showed me the exact spot where Mr. Piedra made him get off the bus--it was in front of a little restaurant called "Mexico." On the next day after this, my friend again reported to Mr. Piedra; only by this time he was seriously ill and was taken immediately to the camp doctor. The camp doctor saw him and sent him right away to the General Hospital in Los Angeles. They told us later that it was too late by this time to do anything for him.



That same day that he arrived at the General Hospital in Los Angeles, he lapsed into a coma and never regained consciousness again. We went to see him once. He, of course, could not talk to us; and his throat was horribly inflamed and swollen. Approximately a week after he entered the General Hospital in Los Angeles, he died. Several of us asked later what the diagnoses of the disease had been, but they told us that it was never known--that it might have been gangrene and then it might have been tetanus, I don't know for sure.

Just before my friend died one of the Consul's men came out to the camp for the purpose of "levantar una acta". At this time we told the Consul's helper all about how our friend had tried to see the doctor before he had become seriously ill, how he had been refused permission to do so. The Consul's helper did not put these things in the "acta". He did not involve anyone on the camp staff, and I think this might have been due to the fact that he is a 'compadre' of Mr. Piedra. All I know is that there was no reason for his dying if he had been allowed to see a doctor on time.

The body was put in a mortuary in Azusa, and we said rosaries over it for three nights. Finally, after all the legal forms had been obtained from the authorities, the body was taken to Los Angeles and flown to my home town where this boy lived.